

ARNOLD ARBORETUM  
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**Lilacs.** Many additions to the Lilacs which can be cultivated in our gardens have been made during the last fifty years, and there are now in the Arboretum collection some twenty-three species, several hybrids, and one hundred and sixty or seventy forms of the common garden Lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*). Lilacs to most people mean tall bushes with lilac-colored or with white fragrant flowers, the forms of *Syringa vulgaris* found in all old gardens and known in the eastern states at least since the middle of the 18th century, the plants loved by Washington and planted by him in his garden at Mt. Vernon. A good example of these old-fashioned Lilacs can be seen in the Arboretum on the east slope of Bussey Hill just below the overlook. These Lilacs were planted at least a hundred years ago by Benjamin Bussey on each side of one of his garden walks which they have now obliterated. These old Lilac bushes bloom every year and their flowers, although small, are more fragrant than those of many of the modern varieties. Although the common Lilac reached England from Constantinople as early as 1593 it is only in comparatively recent years that horticulturists have seriously undertaken the task of improving the flowers by selecting and propagating the most distinct seedling forms and by crossing these among themselves. The largest number of these improved forms of the common Lilac have been made by the French nurseryman Lemoine of Nancy; many of the good varieties were raised in Germany and in recent years Mr. John Dunbar of Rochester, New York, has raised a few seedling Lilacs which seem destined to find a permanent place in gardens. Only a few hybrids between species of

Lilacs have yet been raised, but the crossing of some of the new Chinese species might well produce forms unlike any of the Lilacs now in cultivation. At present only four hybrid races of Lilacs are in cultivation. The first of these appeared about 1810 in the Botanic Garden at Rouen in France, and originated probably by a natural cross between the common and the Persian Lilac (*S. persica*). Through some unfortunate confusion of names the plant is called *Syringa chinensis*; a much better name for it is *S. rothomagensis* which it is often called. This is a vigorous shrub often fifteen feet tall and broad, with narrow leaves and great clusters of small red flowers so heavy that the slender branches droop under their weight. Where plenty of room can be given it this is one of the best of all Lilacs. There is a form with pale flesh-colored, nearly white flowers which is not as handsome as the red-flowered form, and there are other varieties which differ in the slightly darker color of the flowers. The next hybrid Lilac to appear, *Syringa hyacinthiflora*, is the result of crossing *S. vulgaris* with *S. oblata*, a large round-topped shrub from northern China with broad, thick, lustrous leaves and small clusters of large, exceedingly fragrant, lilac-purple flowers. This hybrid has the habit and the foliage of *S. oblata* and small, semidouble, violet, fragrant flowers in small clusters. It blooms earlier than any of the forms of *S. vulgaris*, but has little to recommend it as a garden plant. The general name of *Syringa Henryi* has been given to a group of hybrids between the Hungarian *S. Josikaea* and the Chinese *S. villosa*, raised several years ago at the Museum in Paris. These plants, like both of their parents, bloom after the flowers of *S. vulgaris* have faded; they have the dark blue-violet flowers of the Hungarian plant and the large leaves of *S. villosa*. The handsomest of this breed is called Lutèce and is a valuable addition to the late-flowering Lilacs. The latest of the hybrid Lilacs was raised by Lemoine by crossing *S. vulgaris* with the variety of the Chinese *S. affinis* with fragrant violet-colored flowers (var. *Giraldii*). The plants of this hybrid grow rapidly and have the tall loose habit of the Chinese plant; like it, too, they bloom early and their flowers are fragrant. Forms of this hybrid appeared in Lemoine's recent catalogue under the names of Berryer, Claude Bernard, Lamartine, Mirabeau, Pascale and Vauban. These have only recently been added to the Arboretum collection and it is too soon to speak of their value here as garden plants. Among the Chinese species which have been introduced in the last forty years those which will certainly retain a permanent place in gardens are *S. pubescens*, *S. villosa*, *S. Sweginzovii*, *S. tomentella*, *S. Julianae* and *S. Komarowii*. By crossing the seedling varieties of *S. vulgaris* the blooming period of the Lilac has been extended, the size of the flowers and of the flower-clusters has been increased, many forms with double flowers have been raised; and new colors ranging from pale pink to dark red and to blue have been produced. As with Roses, some of the new forms have lost much of the fragrance of the flowers which is one of the great qualities of the old-fashioned garden Lilacs.

**Chinese Cotoneasters.** Many of these plants are now in flower in the Shrub Collection and among the Chinese plants on Bussey Hill. There



are twenty-four species and varieties of these plants established in the Arboretum, raised from seeds collected by Wilson in central and western China, and taken as a whole this is the group of shrubs introduced by the Arboretum from China which promises to be of the greatest value for the decoration of New England gardens. For garden purposes they can be arranged according to their habit of growth, the color of their flowers and the color of their fruit as follows:

1. Prostrate shrubs with wide-spreading branches, small red flowers and fruits, and small thick dark green leaves persistent in this climate until the beginning of winter, *C. adpressa*, *C. apiculata*, *C. horizontalis* and its varieties *perpusilla* and *Wilsonii*; of these varieties *perpusilla* is much dwarfer than the common form of *C. horizontalis*, and *Wilsonii* is taller than the others.

2. Large shrubs with white flowers and red fruits, *C. hupehensis*, *C. multiflora calocarpa*, *C. racemiflora* and *C. racemiflora soongorica*. In this group are perhaps the handsomest of these plants. *C. hupehensis* is a tall, broad, fast-growing plant with dark green leaves, larger flowers than those of the other species, and large, scarlet fruits. The flowers are in compact clusters which entirely cover the branches, but the fruit has been only sparingly produced in the Arboretum. The other plants in this group have blue-green leaves and gracefully arching stems. The flowers are rather smaller than those of *C. hupehensis* but the conspicuous fruit, although rather duller in color than the fruit of that species, covers the branches for many weeks in the early autumn. Judged by its gracefully arching branches, its abundant flowers and the size, color, and quality of its fruit, *C. racemiflora soongorica* is the handsomest of the Chinese Cotoneasters which can be grown in this climate and one of the handsomest shrubs of recent introduction.

3. Shrubs with red flowers and fruits, *C. divaricata*, *C. bullata* var. *macrophylla*, and *C. bullata*, var. *floribunda*, *C. Dielsiana*, *C. Dielsiana* var. *elegans*, *C. Zabellii*, *C. Zabellii*, var. *miniata*, *C. Franchetii*, *C. obscura*. In this group *C. divaricata* and *C. Dielsiana* and its variety are perhaps the most desirable garden plants. They have wide-spreading, slightly drooping branches, small, dark-green lustrous leaves, and small rather inconspicuous flowers and fruit. *C. Franchetii* appears less hardy in the Arboretum than the others.

4. Shrubs with red flowers and black fruit, *C. nitens*, *C. acutifolia*, *C. acutifolia* var. *villosula*, *C. ambigua*, *C. foveolata* and *C. moupinensis*. Of this group *C. nitens*, although the flowers and fruit are small, is perhaps the most attractive, for none of the Chinese Cotoneasters have more gracefully spreading branches and more lustrous leaves; and it may well be placed among the four or five of the handsomest of all the deciduous leaved species of Cotoneaster which can be grown in this climate. *C. moupinensis* and *C. foveolata* are the tallest of the Chinese Cotoneasters, with much larger leaves than the others, the former becoming almost treelike in habit. They are coarse and not very attractive shrubs, but the brilliancy of the autumn color of the leaves of *C. foveolata* entitles it to a place in the collection. The Chinese Cotoneasters produce great quantities of seeds in the Arbore-

tum, and during the last two or three years these have been distributed among American nurserymen. They are easily raised and grow rapidly, so that there seems a chance that these beautiful plants will soon be seen in many American gardens.

**Azaleas.** This is a good year for most of the Azaleas. The earliest of them, *Rhododendron dahuricum* and *R. mucronulatum* (all Azaleas are now called Rhododendrons), were full of flower-buds, although those of the former were killed by a late frost. The red-flowered Japanese *R. Kaempferi* has never before been so splendid, and *R. Vaseyi*, the earliest of the American species to bloom, is as usual covered with its clear pink or rarely white flowers, and these in a few days will be followed by the rose-pink flowers of *R. canescens* and *R. nudiflorum*; and for nearly two months more Azalea flowers will add beauty and interest to the Arboretum.

**Lonicera syringantha.** Attention is called to the plant of this Chinese Honeysuckle in the collection of Chinese Shrubs on Bussey Hill, which is now covered with its small violet colored and violet scented flowers which have not before been produced in such profusion. The arching stems, small leaves and fragrant flowers make this one of the most charming plants blooming this spring in the Arboretum. Many other Honeysuckles are flowering now in the Shrub Collection, and on the right-hand side of the Bussey Hill Road. Here is a good opportunity to see how Bush Honeysuckles of the Tartarian type and its hybrids can develop into great shapely bushes when they are allowed sufficient space in which to grow.

The earliest Rose to flower in the Arboretum this year is *R. Ecae*, a native of Afghanistan and Turkestan; it has erect stems, leaves with small, very lustrous leaflets, and pale yellow flowers not more than an inch in diameter. The first flowers of *R. Hugonis*, *R. omeiensis* and *R. cinnamomea* are also opening. *R. Hugonis* has not before in the Arboretum been so full of flower-buds, and next week to any one interested in Roses will well repay a visit.

**Viburnums** of the week are the English Traveller's Tree, *Viburnum lantana*, and the American Black Haw, *V. prunifolium*. The former is a tall, broad bush, with wide gray-green leaves and large convex clusters of white flowers which are followed by handsome and abundant lustrous fruits, bright red when fully grown, and then gradually turning black. This is one of the European shrubs which grows as well here as in its native country. Fortunately it can now be found in American nurseries. The Black Haw is an arborescent shrub or a tree occasionally thirty feet high with a round-topped head of spreading branches; the narrow pointed leaves are lustrous and in the autumn turn deep rich wine color; the flowers are white, in rather smaller clusters than those of the other American tree Viburnums, and the large fruit in drooping clusters is dark blue or nearly black and covered with a glaucous bloom. This is a good plant for wood-margins and the borders of roads.